

Weekly Newscast Lesson Plan



Learning English with CBC is a joint project with
CBC Calgary, CBC Edmonton and the Government of Alberta



Calgary

December 12, 2016

Objectives:

- To develop listening skills
- To increase vocabulary
- To increase knowledge of current events
- To provide an authentic learning resource

Contents:

- Three news stories
- Vocabulary building activities
- Listening comprehension activities
- Transcripts
- Answer keys

News story #1 Parents of four children found dead in drug overdose (0:11)

Setting the Scene



The family home of the couple and four children in Calgary. (Bryan Labby/CBC) (CBC file photo)

Illegal drugs are a problem in many parts of the world. They are connected to crime, violence, personal problems and death. When you buy medicine in a pharmacy, you know exactly what kind of medicine it is. You can read a list of ingredients. However, illegal drugs are not regulated. People may take a drug that is mixed with something else. Sometimes, these mixed drugs are very dangerous. They can lead to death.

Pre-listening Questions

Do you think drugs are a big problem in Calgary?

How are drug crimes punished in Canada?

How are they punished in your country?

Vocabulary

Synonym Matching

To help you better understand the story, choose the pair of synonyms (words with similar meaning) that best match each of the vocabulary words. *Answers are in the appendix.*

<u>Answer</u>	<u>Word from the story</u>	<u>Synonyms</u>
_____	orphans (n.)	a) illegal sellers, dealers
_____	apparent (adj.)	b) vary, many different
_____	overdose (n.)	c) poisonous, deadly
_____	range (v.)	d) clear, visible
_____	traffickers (n.)	e) reported, exclaimed
_____	results (n.)	f) parentless, kids alone
_____	announced (v.)	g) pain-reliever, drug
_____	linked (v.)	h) excess, deadly amount
_____	toxic (adj.)	i) answers, effects
_____	opioid (n.)	j) connected, association

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

carfentanil – a strong and dangerous drug

fentanyl – a strong and dangerous drug

We encourage you to study these new words using this link: https://quizlet.com/_2w5p29

You can practice online for free and as many times as you want to. The Quizlet app is a free vocabulary study tool. You can download it to your phone or tablet and practice new vocabulary whenever you have time.

Listening Task

Matching

Read the numbers and measures below. As you listen to the audio, complete the sentences by matching the number with the correct information that follows. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Number/Date		Information
4	•	• the man and woman
14	•	• time between the deaths and the province's announcement
30s	•	• age of the oldest child
couple	•	• number of Alberta deaths linked to carfentanil
months	•	• children in the family
one day	•	• carfentanil is _____x stronger than fentanyl
15	•	• age of the parents
14	•	• time before test results show information
100	•	• number of deaths between September and November

Food for Thought

What do you think will happen to those four children?

What are some of the dangers of drugs?

What can the police do to reduce drug use?

News story #2 Canadian food prices could rise in 2017 (1:22)

Setting the Scene



(Jacques Boissinot/Canadian Press) (CBC file photo)

Canada has a large food and agriculture industry. Different provinces produce different kinds of food. Alberta is famous for its beef. Many kinds of fruit grow in B.C. and southern Ontario. Saskatchewan is famous for wheat. Fish and seafood come from B.C. and the Maritimes. Canada gets some of its food from other countries, like bananas and pineapples. The prices of these items change sometimes. These changes are caused by the economy, the weather, fuel prices and other factors.

Pre-listening Questions

Where do you usually buy food?

Are there any foods from your home country that you can't buy in Canada?

Have you ever been to a farmer's market in Canada? What kind of food did you see?

Vocabulary

Find the definition (Multiple Choice)

Learning some of the new words you will hear in the listening will help you understand the news story. Read the sentences below and choose the best definition for the words in **bold**.

Answers are in the appendix.

1. My brother always has a big party on his birthday. It's my favourite **annual** event.
 - a) once a year
 - b) every year
2. Before travelling, the weather forecast helps you **look ahead** and plan the clothing to pack.
 - a) be careful
 - b) imagine the future
3. Losing weight is one **reason** why people eat fruits and vegetables.
 - a) thought
 - b) cause
4. There is an **increase** in sales in December. Lots of people go shopping around Christmas.
 - a) possibility
 - b) growth
5. Next year, the company will have a new boss. This **incoming** boss is moving from Edmonton.
 - a) arriving or taking a place
 - b) paying or collecting money
6. Oil is a big part of Alberta's economy. When oil sales are low, the economy is **weak**.
 - a) long time, many days
 - b) not strong, having little power
7. Do you have any cash? I want to buy this bag of apples but I'm **short** by \$1.00.
 - a) not have enough
 - b) not work well
8. It is important to **harvest** vegetables in the fall before the snow falls.
 - a) gather from the fields
 - b) cook or prepare
9. Rapeseed plants are a beautiful yellow colour. When you drive in the country, you can see the **crops** easily.
 - a) land for farming
 - b) plants for food

We encourage you to study these new words using this link: https://quizlet.com/_2w5p97

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Listening Activity

Answering True/False questions

Read the following statements. While you listen to the story, decide whether the statements are **true** or **false**. Write your answer in the blanks.

Answers are in the appendix.

1. ____ Canadian families could be spending an extra \$240 on food next year.
2. ____ The annual Food Price Report explains the price of food in 2017.
3. ____ It says food prices could rise between \$3.00-\$5.00.
4. ____ Meat, vegetables, fruit and seafood could go up in price the most.
5. ____ There are a number of reasons for the increase in price.
6. ____ The reasons are weather, energy costs and the US dollar.
7. ____ Donald Trump is also a possible reason that costs could rise.
8. ____ Trump said he would force child workers to leave the United States.
9. ____ If that happens, the agricultural industry could be short 2,000,000 workers.
10. ____ Farmers may not be able to hire enough people to work during the harvest.

Food for thought

Is food in Canada cheaper or more expensive than your home country?

Why do you think that is?

How can people save money when they buy food?

News story #3 Unusually cold weather hits Calgary (2:51)

Setting the Scene



Calgarians are encouraged to dress warmly and be careful in cold temperatures. (Dave Gilson/CBC) (CBC file photo)

Calgary is typically very cold in the winter. However, recent temperatures have been unusual. This December is colder than normal. Many people in Canada love winter because it looks beautiful. They can also play fun winter sports and games. However, this weather can be dangerous. People need to dress very warmly, and take breaks indoors to warm up. They should cover most of their bodies, because the cold can damage the skin in a condition called frostbite. They should also be careful walking or driving, because ice on the streets can be slippery.

Pre-listening Questions

Do you like the winter? What are the pros and cons?

Have you adjusted to the weather in Canada?

How is the Canadian climate different from your home country?

Vocabulary

Sentence Completion

Learning some of the new words you will hear in the listening will help you understand the news story. Use the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

cold snap (n.)	when it gets very cold for a short period of time
temperature (n.)	measurement of how hot or cold it is
degree (n.)	a unit of measuring temperature (e.g., in Celsius)
attractions (n.)	interesting places that people visit
extreme (adj.)	very much, beyond normal or acceptable
senior (adj.)	in a high position
frigid (adj.)	very cold
stick around (v.)	remain, not leave

1. Every winter, many Canadians take vacations to warm places like Mexico and Florida. They like to take a break from the _____ cold. However, I _____ Alberta, because I love to ski.
2. Farmers follow the weather carefully. A _____ can damage their crops by freezing the plants.
3. While Canada uses the Celsius system to measure _____, the USA uses the Fahrenheit system. So while 35 _____ is hot in Canada, it's cold in the USA.
4. Marta is a _____ teacher at the school. Newer teachers talk to her when they have problems and need advice.
5. The Rocky Mountains are one of Canada's biggest _____. Millions of people visit them each year, even in winter when the weather can feel _____.

Extra definitions to help you understand the listening:

wind chill – the effect of wind making the temperature feel colder

climatologist – a scientist who studies climate (weather patterns)

We encourage you to study these new words using this link: https://quizlet.com/_2w5pgt

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Listening Activity

Multiple Choice

Read the following questions. Then listen to the audio and circle the best answer to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. Calgary is in the month / moment / middle of a cold snap.
2. Temperatures have dropped well below negative / normal / nothing for this time of year.
3. Normally, Calgary would have daytime high / hot / whole temperatures of about -1° .
4. Over the last week, we have seen daytime high around -20° / 20° / -28° .
5. The wind chill is making it feel as cold as -30 / -40 / -38 .
6. The ski hill at Canada Olympic Park and the Calgary Zoo Lights / Lakes / Lions were closed.
7. David Phillips is the senior climatologist with Environment / Ecology / Entertainment Canada.
8. These temperatures could stick around for up to two months / two weeks / ten weeks.

Food for thought

How does your life change when the weather is cold? What do you do differently?

What do you eat and drink in the cold weather?

If you had a friend who was new to Canada, what advice would you give for surviving the cold?

Transcripts of Weekly news stories

	DECEMBER WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, I'm Shannon Scott and this is Learning English with CBC for December 12 th with stories that made news over the past week.	0:00
Story 1	Four children are now orphans after they found their parents dead in their home of an apparent drug overdose. The kids range in age from four to 14. Police say the man and the woman were both in their 30's. They say it looks like they were drug users, and not drug traffickers. Police added that the couple may have taken something without knowing what it was. It will be months before tests results show what, if any, drugs the pair had been taking. These deaths came just one day before the province announced that carfentanil is now linked to 15 deaths in Alberta. 14 of those happened between September and the end of November. Carfentanil is a toxic opioid 100 times stronger than fentanyl.	0:11
Story 2	A new study says Canadian families could be spending an extra 420 dollars on food next year. The annual Food Price Report looks ahead to what may happen with the price of food in 2017. It says food prices could rise between three and five per cent, with meat, vegetables, fish and seafood going up in price the most. The reports lists a number of reasons for the increase, including weather, energy costs - including the upcoming carbon tax - and a weak Canadian dollar. It also lists incoming US President Donald Trump as a possible reason costs could rise. Trump has said he would force illegal workers to leave the United States. The study says if that happens, the agricultural industry could be short 2 million workers. That means farmers may not be able to hire enough people to harvest their crops.	1:22
Story 3	Calgary is in the middle of a cold snap. Temperatures have dropped well below normal for this time of year, with the wind chill making it feel even colder. Normally at this time of year, Calgary would have daytime high temperatures of about minus one degree. Over the last week, we have seen daytime highs around minus 20 degrees, with the wind chill making it feel as cold as minus 38. It's been so cold, some popular attractions have been closed. The ski hill at Canada Olympic Park and the Calgary Zoo Lights were closed for much of the week because of the extreme wind-chill. David Phillips is the senior climatologist with Environment Canada. He says these frigid temperatures could stick around for up to two weeks.	2:51

Answer keys

News story 1 Parents of four children found dead in drug overdose (0:11)

Vocabulary

<u>Answer</u>	<u>Word from the story</u>	<u>Synonyms</u>
<u>f</u>	orphans (n.)	a. illegal sellers, dealers
<u>d</u>	apparent (adj.)	b. vary, many different
<u>h</u>	overdose (n.)	c. poisonous, deadly
<u>b</u>	range (v.)	d. clear, visible
<u>a</u>	traffickers (n.)	e. reported, exclaimed
<u>i</u>	results (n.)	f. parentless, kids alone
<u>e</u>	announced (v.)	g. pain-reliever, drug
<u>j</u>	linked (v.)	h. excess, deadly amount
<u>c</u>	toxic (adj.)	i. answers, effects
<u>g</u>	opioid (n.)	j. connected, association

Listening

<u>Number/Date</u>	<u>Information</u>
4	the man and woman
14	time between the deaths and the province's announcement
30s	age of the oldest child
couple	number of Alberta deaths linked to carfentanil
months	children in the family
one day	carfentanil is _____x stronger than fentanyl
15	age of the parents
14	time before test results show information
100	number of deaths between September and November

News story 2

Canadian food prices could rise in 2017 (1:22)

Vocabulary

1. My brother always has a big party on his birthday. It's my favourite **annual** event.
a) **once a year**
b) every year
2. Before travelling, the weather forecast helps you **look ahead** and plan the clothing to pack.
a) be careful
b) **imagine the future**
3. Losing weight is one **reason** why people eat fruits and vegetables.
a) thought
b) **cause**
4. There is an **increase** in sales in December. Lots of people go shopping around Christmas.
a) possibility
b) **growth**
5. Next year, the company will have a new boss. This **incoming** boss is moving from Edmonton.
a) **arriving or taking a place**
b) paying or collecting money
6. Oil is a big part of Alberta's economy. When oil sales are low, the economy is **weak**.
a) long time, many days
b) **not strong, having little power**
7. Do you have any cash? I want to buy this bag of apples but I'm **short** by \$1.00.
a) **not have enough**
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8. It is important to **harvest** vegetables in the fall before the snow falls.
a) **gather from the fields**
b) cook or prepare
9. Rapeseed plants are a beautiful yellow colour. When you drive in the country, you can see the **crops** easily.
a) land for farming
b) **plants for food**

Listening

1. **F** Canadian families could be spending an extra \$240 on food next year.
2. **T** The annual Food Price Report explains the price of food in 2017.
3. **F** It says food prices could rise between \$3.00-\$5.00.
4. **F** Meat, vegetables, fruit and seafood could go up in price the most.
5. **T** There are a number of reasons for the increase in price.
6. **F** The reasons are weather, energy costs, and the US dollar.
7. **T** Donald Trump is also a possible reason that costs could rise.
8. **F** Trump said he would force child workers to leave the United States.
9. **T** If that happens, the agricultural industry could be short 2,000,000 workers.
10. **T** Farmers may not be able to hire enough people to work during the harvest.

News story 3

Unusually cold weather hits Calgary (2:51)

Vocabulary

1. Every winter, many Canadians take vacations to warm places like Mexico and Florida. They like to take a break from the extreme cold. However, I stick around Alberta, because I love to ski.
2. Farmers follow the weather carefully. A cold snap can damage their crops by freezing the plants.
3. While Canada uses the Celsius system to measure temperature, the USA uses the Fahrenheit system. So while 35 degrees is hot in Canada, it's cold in the USA.
4. Marta is a senior teacher at the school. Newer teachers talk to her when they have problems and need advice.
5. The Rocky Mountains are one of Canada's biggest attractions. Millions of people visit them each year, even in winter when the weather can feel frigid.

Listening

1. Calgary is in the month / moment / middle of a cold snap.
2. Temperatures have dropped well below negative / normal / nothing for this time of year.
3. Normally, Calgary would have daytime high / hot / whole temperatures of about -1°.
4. Over the last week, we have seen daytime high around -20° / 20° / -28°.
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